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BORDER SECURITY – ONE STEP TOWARD  
RESOLVING THE CONFLICT IN IRAQ

by

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## ***Abstract***

One true thing since the terrorist attacks on 9/11 is that the world has changed. Consequently, the US military's ability to adapt is paramount. For instance, in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the US and coalition forces are faced with an unanticipated insurgency unlike any they have faced before. This insurgency is proving to be resilient and difficult to defeat. The purpose of this paper is to employ innovative thinking in an effort to help solve this insurgency dilemma. It will do this by proving that border security is a key component to suppressing the Iraqi insurgency and that border security operations have been hindered by the lack of interagency coordination. As a solution, this paper will propose the formation of a border security interagency working group. This working group would act as the focal point for all border security issues and would have the responsibility of developing a comprehensive border security strategy. Finally, this paper will propose that a border security air component should be a part and under the control of the Iraq Department of Border Enforcement (DBE).

## **INTRODUCTION**

With the end of major combat operations in Iraq and the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, the Coalition's focus now turns to the process of conflict resolution. Unfortunately the Coalition is faced with an unrelenting adversary that is conducting a fierce insurgency. Suppressing the insurgency is a difficult task which has been complicated by the lack of sufficient border security. Free movement across the border provides insurgents safe havens to resupply, organize, and recruit for continuous operations. Although there are reports of success in securing certain areas of the Iraqi border, there is still a lot of work to be done.

This paper will focus on Iraqi border security and will maintain that it is a key component of the insurgency's center of gravity (COG). It will identify deficiencies with the current Iraqi border security operation and it will argue that a contributing factor to these deficiencies is the lack of interagency coordination.

The first step to improving the interagency coordination process is to establish a border security interagency working group. This working group would act as the focal point for all border security issues and would have the responsibility of developing a comprehensive border security strategy. Part of this strategy should include the development of a more cohesive border security organization with the border security air component directly under the control of the Iraq Department of Border Enforcement (DBE). Finally, this paper will conclude that a border security strategy needs a valid means of measuring its effectiveness in order to determine if the desired objectives, as well as the overall goal of conflict resolution, are being achieved.

## **THE IRAQ BORDER DILEMMA**

One of the main problems faced by Coalition forces in Iraq today is securing the country's borders. This is not a new problem; there are many examples throughout history that show the significance of border security during military campaigns. During the Vietnam conflict, the lack of security along the Laos and Cambodia borders allowed the Chinese and Soviets to easily provide equipment and personnel to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong. US efforts to secure the borders were ineffective and there was virtually no border security provided by Laos or Cambodia.<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, in the early stages of Operation Enduring Freedom the cooperation seen between Coalition Forces and the Pakistanis played a significant role in countering Taliban and al Qaeda members trying to escape across the border. During operations in Tora Bora, the Pakistani Army was quick to move into the Tirah Valley effectively capturing some 250 terrorists fleeing into Pakistan. The Pakistanis provided a substantial force for border security despite the threat of war on the eastern border. At its peak, the Pakistanis provided three Army corps consisting of 60,000 regular troops and 55,000 paramilitary personnel to help secure the western border. As a result not a single breach of security occurred around the bases being used by Coalition Forces.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, the complex network of trails and dirt roads through the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan were well established as a life line of supplies for the Mujahedeen



resistance fighters during the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. These well constructed border crossings combined with the declining support of the Pakistan army are allowing guerrillas to smuggle fighters, weapons and hit teams into the region to fight the Coalition forces attempting to bring democracy to Afghanistan. Intricate plans that incorporate hit and run tactics are used to ambush Coalition forces on a regular basis. The guerillas lure friendly forces into an area, expend their ordnance against the soldiers then quickly escape back across the Pakistan border. Frustration among Coalition forces is high because they are unauthorized to pursue their attackers over the border and the Pakistanis that once provided a staunch resistance now sit in border outposts with heavy-caliber weapons and do nothing.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the same difficulties with border security are occurring today with Operation Iraqi Freedom. Understanding how Iraq became a country will help give clarity to the country's border situation. The internet website News Batch stated:

“Iraq was created from territory which was part of the Ottoman Empire which was destroyed after World War I. The borders of Iraq were created without regard to ethnic, political or even geographic reality. The country is not entirely Arab. The northern mountain portion of the country is inhabited by Kurds, a mountainous tribal ethnic group that has its own language and distinct cultural heritage. The Arabs are divided by Sunni Muslims in the northern and central portions of the country and Shiite Muslims in the southern portion. The political divisions between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in Iraq have become less important starting in the 1980s when the country began developing under Baath party rule.”<sup>4</sup>

During the rule of the Baath party and Saddam Hussein, the border strategy was not necessarily to seal the borders; it was more of a monitoring system to simply keep track of who was crossing, where they were crossing, and for what purpose.<sup>5</sup> According to Amatzia Baram, an Iraq specialist at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, “Under Saddam Hussein, at least 50,000 paramilitary troops patrolled Iraq's borders, and local tribes were paid to monitor areas

where they lived.”<sup>6</sup> Hussein was unconcerned with illegal activity so long as it wasn’t directed towards him or his regime. He was willing to look the other way allowing smuggling operations that benefited some of his constituents as long as the same people supported his agenda. The intricate border monitoring system that Hussein built collapsed with his fall last year.<sup>7</sup>

As a result, it is estimated that 1,000 to 3,000 foreign militants have crossed the border from Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Jordan to fuel the insurgency against the US and coalition forces.<sup>8</sup> Examples of insurgents from each of the countries bordering Iraq are frequently seen as the Coalition forces attempt to secure the country. In one case, US Marines captured an insurgent during an ambush and upon searching him, found a Syrian passport with a date of entry into Iraq of March 2003. The purpose of his visit was simply listed on his entry visa as “Jihad.”<sup>9</sup>

The porous border dilemma is an ongoing issue. According to Coalition officials, Islamic militants volunteering to fight in Iraq or carry cash to fuel the insurgency are using fake passports or bribes to cross the Syrian border into Iraq. Others bypass guard posts altogether and simply drive across the poorly patrolled desert border. A significant number of foreign militants cross the border to join insurgents battling Coalition forces in the Sunni triangle and carry out horrific terror attacks against Iraqi civilians. The Coalition's difficulties stem in part from the increasing sophistication of terrorist infiltration networks. On both sides of the Iraq-Syrian border, networks of what Coalition officials call "facilitators" are established to monitor security at the border, identify weak links and transport operatives to and from the border. The impact has been devastating as waves of suicide bombings continue to wreak havoc on Iraqi citizens and Coalition forces.<sup>10</sup>

Insurgents can also find safe passage by blending in with the hundreds of individuals that cross the border everyday for lawful purposes such as religious pilgrimages or visiting family

members. Many of these individuals don't even recognize that a border exists. A report by National Public Radio correspondent Deborah Amos on the Iraq-Syrian border stated "the border divides nations but not tribes, and in the culture of the Middle East, tribal loyalty is sometimes more important than citizenship"<sup>11</sup>

Coalition commanders have recognized the difficulty of intercepting individuals crossing the border illegally. In November 2003, the commander of the 82nd Airborne, Maj. Gen. Charles H. Swannack Jr., admitted that his forces had only intercepted about 20 foreigners out of possibly hundreds trying to infiltrate across the border from Syria over a span of seven months.<sup>12</sup> The Iraq DBE is equally ineffective. DBE officers driving two-wheel drive vehicles are often outrun by people crossing illegally in four-wheel drive Land Cruisers. A long dirt berm built by US military engineers to delineate the Syrian border is easily transversed in many places by vehicles like Toyota pickup trucks.<sup>13</sup> It is also very difficult to prevent corrupt Iraqi DBE guards from letting weapons and fighters into the country. Even though attempts have been made to provide monetary incentives to the DBE guards that apprehend fighters and confiscate weapons it doesn't compare to the thousands of dollars the insurgents offer them in bribes to buy their way across the border.<sup>14</sup>

United States and Iraqi officials are quick to blame Iraqi border countries such as Syria for their perceived lack of security efforts. In May 2004, Washington imposed \$200 million worth of economic sanctions on Syria, charging that the country supported terrorism and was undermining US efforts to stabilize Iraq, in part by failing to curb the transit of terrorists across its borders. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz stated, "[Syria] does not want to see success in Iraq. They're in many ways terrified of it. They could do a lot to control the borders if ... we compelled them to think it was in their interest."<sup>15</sup>

Examples like these show the significance of border security and the high level of attention it receives. Unfortunately, determining the number of troops, types of equipment and techniques to employ to secure the border is not an exact science. The difficulty of providing a robust border security operation makes its significance easy to overlook. However, it must be understood that the freedom of movement by insurgents across borders is a key component to their operations and if Coalition forces were able to control the border it would be a direct attack on the adversary's COG.

## **CENTER OF GRAVITY ANALYSIS**

**The importance of identifying the proper COG cannot be overstated. Determining the adversary's strategic COG and critical vulnerabilities is absolutely essential to establish clarity of purpose, to focus efforts and ultimately, to generate synergistic results in the employment of ones forces.**

**Joint Publication 5-00.1**

Determining an adversary's COG as described in the Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning is vitally important. It allows a combatant commander a means to determine where to apply forces and capabilities.<sup>16</sup> However, simply stating a COG does not give the combatant commander enough information to know where to focus efforts to inflict the most damage on an adversary's COG. Therefore, one must determine the enemy's critical capabilities (CC), critical requirements (CR), and critical vulnerabilities (CV) which can be exploited by the combatant commander to gain a marked advantage over the adversary.<sup>17</sup>

In an effort to identify the COG and critical vulnerabilities of the insurgency operations in Iraq one can look at the work done by Dr. Joe Strange at the US Marine Corp War College. In his paper “Understanding Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities: Part 2”, Dr. Strange does a COG analysis that defines the Middle Eastern terror group’s center of gravity ten days after the 9/11 attacks (See Figure 1). The analysis suggests that the enemy’s COG is “Middle Eastern terror groups centered on al Qaeda.” Since al Qaeda’s motivations are similar to those of

## War Against Terrorism, Post 9/11

### Center of Gravity Analysis

= Strategic Endstate: “a significant reduction in the threat posed to Western democracies by extremist Middle Eastern terrorist groups”.

#### Enemy Center of Gravity Analysis

<p><b>CG Enemy</b> Middle Eastern terror groups centered on al Qaeda.</p>	<p><b>CC</b> Force the withdrawal of the USA from the Middle East through persistent terrorist attacks against US targets, thereby creating the conditions where extremist groups can topple moderate Middle East regimes.</p>
<p><b>CR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure bases for training, logistic support, command.</li> <li>• Continuing recruitment of committed followers for the long war: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Cause – the Arab-Israeli conflict,</li> <li>○ Transmit the Message.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Charismatic leadership.</li> <li>• Financial backing to position and sustain long-term “sleepers” in Western states.</li> <li>• Technological know-how to develop and use weapons of mass destruction – to force the eventual ending of the West’s will to win.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bases need host nations, upon whom military, diplomatic, and economic pressure can be mounted.</li> <li>• A resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict will remove the most potent Cause for recruitment.</li> <li>• Majority of Muslims world-wide are moderate, thereby isolating extremists in most societies and limiting spread of the Message.</li> <li>• Charismatic leaders can be found and removed from influence – although care to avoid martyrdom.</li> <li>• Worldwide financial network and movement of money can now be monitored through advanced IT, potentially identifying terror groups’ sources of funds.</li> <li>• Limiting flow of know-how to developing nations will make leakage of technology and materials to terror groups more difficult.</li> </ul>

Figure 1<sup>18</sup>

the Iraqi insurgents, one can conclude that the insurgent's COG is "Middle Eastern terror groups centered on [Jihad]."

Dr. Strange's analysis determines that a critical capability of the Iraqi insurgents is the ability to "force the withdrawal of the [US and Coalition forces] from [Iraq] through persistent terrorist attacks against [Iraqi and Coalition] targets, thereby creating the conditions where extremist groups can [control the Iraqi government]."<sup>19</sup> The next step in the analysis is to determine the critical requirements that allow the insurgency to maintain their critical capability. By examining the historic examples mentioned in the introduction one can see how free movement across international borders allows access to safe havens which are used by insurgents to recruit, organize, train and equip for persistent terrorist attacks. One could therefore conclude that a critical requirement of the insurgency is the ability to move freely across the border smuggling weapons and fighters as well as having access to safe havens to reconstitute forces. Thus, a critical vulnerability of the insurgents is the Coalition's ability to observe and intercept illegal border crossings via ground and air assets.

By using this analysis to identify critical requirements and critical vulnerabilities it is easy to conclude that freedom of movement across the border is a key component of the Iraqi insurgency and effectively controlling the border would be a direct attack on the adversary's COG. The next section will look at current operations in Iraq and their effect on the insurgents critical vulnerability.

## **CURRENT BORDER SECURITY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ**

The vast and rugged nature of approximately 2,268 miles of land boundaries and unpopulated areas make the Iraqi border difficult to patrol and secure. This is a daunting task faced by the Multinational Corp-Iraq (MNC-I), the organization responsible for current ongoing operations in Iraq. The seven Major Subordinate Commands (MSC) that fall under MNC-I have a standing order to conduct border security operations. However, for reasons unknown, border security operations often fall below the priority cut line. Even when the priority for a border security operation is elevated by the MSC, it still lacks all the component coordination required to be effective according to Lt. Col. Chris Donovan, Chief of Strategy Division at the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) in Iraq.<sup>20</sup> If border security was recognized as a top priority by Coalition commanders more could be done to deal with the problem. The use of air and space assets to include aircraft, UAVs and satellites in combination with ground forces could provide a substantial means to securing the border. This would mean taking the limited number of troops and assets away from the other higher prioritized missions.

Prioritizing missions is a matter of numbers according to a study by the RAND Corporation that states the overall number of troops required for a peacekeeping operation of this nature is well below that required. The study shows that the number of troops in a peacekeeping operation is directly linked to security and civil order. It suggests a security force of one soldier for every five civilians is required to successfully accomplish a peacekeeping operation.<sup>21</sup> Using the information from this study indicates that only 30% of the required troops are currently deployed to Iraq.



This fact has not been overlooked by Coalition commanders. Their push to use conventional forces to train Iraqis to take over border security operations shows their understanding of the situation. For example, in some of the most rugged portions of the Northern Iraqi border, small seven man US Army Long Range Surveillance Detachment (LRSD) teams have been tasked with training Kurds as guard police to patrol a remote stretch of border known for its tradition of smuggling, bribery, and violence. The LRSD soldiers are not necessarily trained to conduct this type of training mission which is normally conducted by Special Forces.<sup>22</sup> This fact doesn't stop the Coalition commanders desire to train the Iraqis as quickly as possible with whatever means available thus relieving the burden on Coalition forces. These ad hoc training missions effectiveness is limited. A plan for an enduring border security strategy that can be reasonably accomplished by the Iraqis with minimal support from Coalition forces needs to be established.

The fundamental problem with developing a robust Iraqi border security strategy is the lack of coordination between the multiple agencies involved in the reconstruction. The responsible DoD organization for Iraqi reconstruction is the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I). Below MNF-I are the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I), responsible for military and civilian organization reconstruction and MNC-I, responsible for current ongoing operations. Under the MNSTC-I are the Combined Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) and the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT). The CPATT is responsible for coordinating the efforts to equip, organize, train and mentor the Iraq DBE<sup>23</sup> which falls under the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in the new Iraqi government. The CMATT is responsible for the development, planning and mentoring support of aircraft for the new Iraq Air Force (IAF)<sup>24</sup> which falls under the Ministry of Defense (MOD) in the new Iraqi government. The IAF

controls air assets and DBE controls ground assets both of which are vital components of an effective Iraqi border security strategy. Currently these agencies are working independently with very little coordination.

Fortunately, funding has not been a problem. Currently \$450M in reconstruction funding has been allocated to the DBE.<sup>25</sup> A January 2005 US Department of State report on Iraq relief and reconstruction mentioned a plan to build 142 new border forts. In addition to the building of border forts, funds have been used to deliver vehicles, weapons, and body armor. There are also plans to purchase x-ray machines, metal detectors, ground sensors, explosive detection devices and night vision goggles.<sup>26</sup> The Iraqi Border Police (IBP) will use this equipment to carry out their duties which include protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq, providing security for fixed points of entry and patrolling the borders, which include mountainous, desert, marshy and coastal areas. Most IBP officers drive all-terrain vehicles of various makes and models and are equipped with 9mm pistols and AK 47 rifles.<sup>27</sup>

There is also a substantial effort to increase the effectiveness of the DBE through reorganizing, recruiting, and training. The January 2005 US Department of State report on Iraq relief and reconstruction stated:

“The current strength of the DBE is 16,654 (up from the 15,688 reported in October, but down from 18,223 in July). This change is a result of several factors. First, the Iraqi government transferred Civil Customs from the MOI to the Ministry of Finance, and moved the Nationality Office personnel from under the DBE to a separate directorate reporting directly to the MOI. Second, Immigration is no longer a part of DBE and is now merged with the Office of Nationality, reporting directly to the MOI. Third, the MOI established a new brigade (the Special Border Force) consisting of 1,000 to 1,200 personnel, of which 519 are currently training in Jordan. The adjusted end strength authorization for the DBE is 28,360 consisting of only border and customs police. 1,375 new IBP personnel were hired by the DBE in the last quarter.”<sup>28</sup>

Approximately 13,241 personnel are presently assigned to IBP.<sup>29</sup> The IBP officers are a mix of rehired and newly hired officers. Newly hired IBP officers undergo an eight-week training program at the Baghdad Police Academy or the Jordan International Police Training Center. In addition, IBP officers undergo an additional two weeks of post-academy training specifically tailored toward border security.

US agencies outside the DoD have become involved with Iraqi border security issues. Part of the training effort has been taken on by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). CBP Commissioner Robert C. Bonner stated “CBP is playing an integral role in developing and institutionalizing Iraq’s overall border security strategy.”<sup>30</sup> Future training plans call for the development of a train-the-trainer program in which a team of civilian advisors will develop a course of study and train a team of Iraqis who will then undertake training future IBP officers. The US CBP is also overseeing a plan for the MOI to open a new \$8 million state-of-the-art Border Enforcement Academy in Sulamaniyyah as well. The Border Enforcement Academy will have the capacity to train up to 1,000 recruits at a time.<sup>31</sup>

Increasing the force size and training is a step in the right direction but it needs to be coupled with a comprehensive border security strategy. If a border security strategy exists, like Commissioner Bonner suggests, there is no evidence that it has been coordinated between the US CBP and the agencies of the Iraq MOI, Iraq MOD and the other Coalition organizations. The lack of a clearly defined Iraqi border security strategy with operating procedures and established links of coordination between all border security components is troubling. In addition, the interagency coordination that might be expected for an operation of this nature is almost non-existent. One step that could be taken to deal with this deficiency is the immediate establishment of an interagency border security working group.

## **THE NEED FOR AN IRAQI BORDER SECURITY WORKING GROUP**

The issue of border security is just one example of a wide variety of issues that need to be addressed when conducting counterinsurgency operations. As the US's vital interests continue to expand throughout the world it would be a mistake to assume that it will be able to achieve national objectives with the DoD alone. Therefore, there is an ever growing need to link all the departments of the government with a single interoperable strategy and security policy. Establishing guidelines that outline the interaction of multiple government organizations will better allocate limited resources so that the US can better resolve specific issues. These types of guidelines could be the start to a new process that would be used to more effectively deal with international issues.

The January 2005 report on Iraq Relief and Reconstruction from the Department of State reveals the complexity of the Iraq reconstruction effort. Projects taking place in Iraq such as national security, law enforcement, humanitarian relief, facilities repair, business skills training, banking system modernization, and human rights are just a few of the 69 projects listed. Each project is assigned a responsible US government agency or multiple agencies that work together to complete the project. The agencies range from the Department of State, Department of Justice, Department of Treasury, and USAID to the DoD. Of the 69 projects listed, the DoD is listed as the lead agency or a supporting agency on 51 projects.<sup>32</sup> This is a substantial burden for the DoD especially in the midst of a continued security threat by insurgents. Furthermore, there is little or no guidance for these organizations to follow when deciding who will be responsible

for what. It is an ad hoc process at best. By looking at individual projects such as border security we can begin the process of defining responsibilities and linking efforts which will ultimately lead to a shared security strategy across all departments and agencies of the US government.

Currently the only mention in Joint Doctrine of border security operations is in the Foreign Internal Defense (FID) section under Civil Affairs. This doctrine lists Special Operations Forces (SOF) as the primary DoD organization responsible for civil affairs operations. Dr. Thomas R. Searle from the Airpower Research Institute at Maxwell AFB points out in his paper, "Making Airpower Effective Against Guerillas", how the burden of responsibility for civil affairs operations is being misdirected. He suggests the 6th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, FL should be expanded to provide comprehensive programs including the training infrastructure that new organizations would need to sustain themselves and build upon.<sup>33</sup> However, it would be a mistake to rely solely on SOF for these operations. They are already stretched to the limit due to their High Demand/Low Density nature. There needs to be an effort to utilize the resources of other government and non-government agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

Joint Publication 3-08, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations Vol I, describes how to organize interagency operations. It lists the first step as identifying all the agencies and organizations that should be involved in developing an interagency forum.<sup>34</sup> This is exactly what needs to happen in Iraq today to more effectively deal with the border security issue. A first course of action is to immediately form an interagency working group to begin the constructive dialog needed between the agencies that have valuable inputs. The most obvious agencies to form the corps of this working group are the IAF, Iraq DBE, MNC-I, MNSTC-I,

CMATT, CPATT, US CBP, and the International Police Training Center in Jordan. The component of a border security strategy each of these agencies holds was previously discussed.

There are other agencies and organizations that would be significant contributors to an Iraqi border security strategy and should be invited to be part of the working group. The first is the US Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC). BORTAC is the special forces of the US border patrol. The May 2004 issue of Customs and Border Protection Today described BORTAC as being,

“...a multi-faceted national response team. BORTAC missions run the gamut from training and advisory work to military type enforcement operations. BORTAC teams respond to needs all around the country, but they are also deployed internationally. Law enforcement organizations in Russia, Africa, Eastern Europe South America, and the Middle East have all received training from BORTAC. Subjects range from tactical interdiction techniques (ambushes) and conflict resolution (counter-sniper) to the BORTAC specialty-tracking and enforcement operations in rural settings. Three years ago they helped Honduras plan, organize, and put into operation an organization with border patrol responsibilities, and a team returned this year to evaluate their progress.”<sup>35</sup>

The contribution that a BORTAC official could make to an Iraq border security working group can easily be seen. US Border Patrol and US Coast Guard strategy specialists could provide valuable members to help develop a border security strategy as well.

Representatives from each of the Coalition organizations conducting current operations should also be included in the working group. For example, representatives from the CAOC should be included to provide information on available Coalition air and space assets that could be used for border security operations. In addition, participants from each of the seven MSCs could provide intelligence officers to help conduct an Intelligence Preparation of the Battle Field as well.

Once established the working group could use the steps from Joint Publication 3-08 as a guideline;

(1) Establish an interagency hierarchy and define the objectives of the response effort; (2) define courses of action for both theater military operations and agency activities; (3) solicit from each agency, department, or organization a clear understanding of the role that each plays; (4) identify potential obstacles to the collective effort arising from conflicting departmental or agency priorities; (5) identify the resources of each participant in order to reduce duplication and increase coherence in the collective effort; (6) define the desired end state and exit criteria; (7) maximize the mission's assets to support the longer term goals of the enterprise; and (8) establish interagency assessment teams.<sup>36</sup>

This existing checklist as well as other portions of Joint Publication 3-08 provides excellent insight on how to establish the interagency operability that is required to handle significant counter-insurgency issues such as border security in Iraq.

The best organization to lead the formation of an Iraqi border security working group is US Joint Force Command (JFCOM). JFCOM incorporates extensive joint operations knowledge and training specific to the combatant commander's area of responsibility, theater perspective, key issues, and regional players. JFCOM has worked extensively with plans for interagency coordination and has proposed establishing a Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) which could be used as the model for a border security working group. Mr. John Eldridge, Political/Military Planner at the Joint Center for Lessons Learned, described the functions of the JIACG best when he said:

The JIACG would be made up of individuals representing a cross section of the agencies. Supplementing this group would be additional experts available on a temporary basis to bring specific knowledge to an operation. It would provide both agency requirements and agency capabilities to the military planners throughout the planning process. It is a big step in the right direction.<sup>37</sup>

Compatibility within DoD is not nearly enough. With dozens of agencies, organizations, and groups available to add value to the planning process,

collaborative applications must be interoperable throughout all agencies required to participate.<sup>38</sup>

Interagency operability is the key to developing a viable Iraqi border security strategy and establishing a border security working group is the first step. Collaborative dialog between pertinent agencies like the IAF, Iraq DBE, MNC-I, MNSTC-I, CMATT, CPATT, US CBP, and the International Police Training Center in Jordan would help ensure each organization is working with a common strategy in mind. Furthermore, a working group that defines the specific duties and responsibilities of each agency would provide a better understanding of the inter-operability and inter-capabilities of each agency. This would maximize the use of limited resources and minimize the duplication of effort. It would also provide a means to identify the subject matter experts in each department and encourage collaboration to link the vital components of a border security operation that were previously mentioned. The next section will examine the significant contributions to border security of one of these vital components, air power.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF AIR POWER TO THE DBE**

Throughout history there have been numerous examples of how air power has been used for border security operations. One of the earliest examples of aerial border patrol is of the US-Mexican border from 1919 to 1921. Immediately following WWI, the Air Service responded to the need to patrol the southern border of the US against incursions and smuggling. This first patrol unit consisted of five squadrons. They were responsible for patrolling the border from San Diego, California to Brownsville, Texas. The operation had come about through the insistence of General "Billy" Mitchell. He felt the air service could aid the Army's cavalry and infantry



units in their operations to keep the border secure through armed reconnaissance. Originally designated the 1<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group, the entire organization was re-designated as the 1<sup>st</sup> Surveillance Group in November 1919 in recognition of the group's real duties of surveillance, observation and troop liaison.<sup>39</sup>

While technology has changed tremendously since the 1920s many aspects of aerial operations of the US Border Patrol (USBP) remain much the same. In many cases, a network of simple communication between a variety of light aircraft are used to create an effective border security system. For example, today in Del Rio, Texas USBP pilots fly light single engine prop driven aircraft like the Piper Cub to patrol areas along the Mexican border that are known crossing points. Many times these pilots are equipped with nothing more than binoculars and two-way radio communications with patrol units on the ground.

The USBP currently operates 125 aircraft with 100 pilots. The operation is broken into sectors along all parts of the US border. Assets are allocated and deployed to areas of known or suspected illegal border intrusions. As described above at its most rudimentary level, aircraft patrol a given area and relay information to ground units. Last year, the USBP fleet of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft flew 44,000 flight hours at a cost of \$300 to \$600 per flight hour. During this time the USBP claims these efforts resulted in two border related arrests per flight hour. Even though this is only 10% of the total arrests for 2003 it shows the significant contribution air power can make to border security. Commissioner Bonner, stated “In terms of overall border enforcement, the benefit CBP Border Patrol Air Operations lends toward facilitating CBP’s primary mission, to prevent terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the United States, is immeasurable.”<sup>40</sup>

Dr. Searle's paper does an excellent job linking the effects of airpower against guerrilla operations. Dr. Searle points out that the use of refurbished former Air Force O-2 aircraft equipped with commercially available forward-looking infrared are being used to effectively patrol pipelines and borders in Africa and South America. He states, "these inexpensive platforms may be nearly as effective as the much costlier Air Force combat aircraft used in this role. Contractors or allies could make a significant contribution in this niche because they can afford to provide large numbers of low-cost platforms such as O-2's, T-6's, AT-37's, or comparable foreign platforms, which they could turn into very effective counter-guerrilla platforms."<sup>41</sup> These ideas could easily be incorporated into an Iraq border security strategy.

Planners for the reconstruction of Iraq have not completely overlooked the benefits that air power provides to border security. The low-cost types of aircraft previously mentioned are currently being pursued by the IAF but there is little evidence that they are being effectively incorporated into the border security strategy. In April 2004, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) announced plans to rebuild the Iraqi Air Force. The CPA announced one of the duties of the IAF would be to police Iraq's borders and conduct surveillance of national assets. The CPA also announced the New Iraqi Air Force would be equipped with six C-130B Hercules transport aircraft, 16 UH-1H helicopters, and a squadron of light reconnaissance aircraft by FY05. During that same month a request for proposal (RFP) was launched by the US Army Aviation and Missile Command for a competitive bid to supply between eight and 16 surveillance aircraft along with the associated pilot and maintenance training of the IAF. The specification called for a two-seat aircraft, equipped with electro-optical and infrared sensors that could cruise for five hours at a speed of 60 to 80 knots.

Because of Middle East politics and the understanding that the use of a US aircraft to conduct this sensitive role might be considered unacceptable, the Jordanian built SBL7-360 Seeker aircraft was selected. The IAF received two of these aircraft in the fall of 2004 and they are now operating out of Al Basrah airbase as part of the new Aerial Surveillance Squadron. The aircraft are being used to conduct reconnaissance and surveillance duties to protect oil pipelines and power lines, as well as border patrols. The aircraft are fitted with an advanced electro-optical and infra-red suite provided by FLIR Systems Inc and function with a downlink system provided by Broadcast Microwave Services.<sup>42</sup>

The SBL7-360's are soon to be followed by sixteen Jordan Aerospace Industries (JAI) SAMA CH2000 aircraft with similar capabilities that were expected to be delivered in early 2005. In November 2004 the United Arab Emirates announced the donation of four Bell 206Bs and seven newly produced Comp Air 7SL light turbine aircraft. Also four UH-1H helicopters are expected to enter service in early 2005 at Al Taji Air Base.<sup>43</sup>

Efforts of this nature to provide airborne assets for border security are a step in the right direction but they are currently moving slowly and are not well coordinated. There are currently no CONOPS or tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) that link the airborne and ground assets. This lack of coordination may also be a contributing factor for not having other low cost airborne assets such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and tethered balloons incorporated into the border security strategy. Having the Aerial Surveillance Squadron fall under the DBE and separate from the IAF may alleviate some of these problems leading to a more effective strategy for the Iraqis.

In addition to aircraft, low cost space based capabilities should be integrated into a border security strategy under the DBE. Providing both ground and airborne border patrol agents with

off the shelf Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers and satellite radios would provide border security agents with a low cost uncomplicated means of marking border intrusion locations and communicating these locations between ground and air units. These air and space assets could be linked with other aerial platforms to provide coverage that could cover an entire border area with 24/7 surveillance. An integrated system of this nature that provides the ability to identify illegal border crossings and rapidly triggers agents to respond and intercept illegal activities needs to be established.

Organizing the Aerial Surveillance Squadron directly under the DBE would ensure that an intricate system for border security is properly and thoroughly established. It would also provide low cost options as well. For example training Iraqi pilots could be accomplished at foreign civilian flight schools to provide pilots with the basic skills required for operations in visual meteorological conditions only. This basic training could be accomplished in a fraction of the time and at a fraction of the cost compared to training a pilot in a year long program comparable to the US Air Force Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training program.

This type of training for light aircraft operations under the DBE would also lead to more rapid expansion which in turn would create more employment opportunities across the aviation spectrum for Iraqi citizens. Unemployment and security are currently the biggest concerns of Iraqis. New projects are extremely helpful, but all new plans should include provisions for the employment of Iraqis. Iraqi unemployment creates resentment and a fertile ground for the recruitment of anti-Coalition elements.<sup>44</sup>

Having the Aerial Surveillance Squadron under the DBE would provide other advantages as well. Dr. Searle points out the importance of enhancing internal stability without destabilizing the regional balance of power. Shifting the focus of airpower away from the IAF

and putting it under the DBE with an emphasis of non-aggression towards neighboring countries would help maintain the stability within the region. He goes on to state that this is a tall order but the US and its Coalition allies must learn to lend this type of support without establishing the means of conducting deep, offensive air strikes thus provoking neighboring countries.<sup>45</sup>

The DBE should consist of a combination of border patrol agents, video cameras, ground sensors, physical barriers, land vehicles, manned aircraft and UAVs combined in a network that allows for the monitoring of each portion of the border with the ability to rapidly intercept illegal crossings when required. It should be easy to see that all the assets of a border security network should fall under the control of a single organization, the DBE, in order for it to be effective. The next step is the development of criteria to effectively measure the effects of a border security strategy.

## **MEASURING THE EFFECTS OF BORDER SECURITY**

A fundamental requirement for any successful border security strategy is a valid means of measuring its effectiveness. Without a measure of how the system influences the full range of strategic, operational, and tactical objectives the system will degenerate into tracking meaningless metrics.<sup>46</sup> For example, tracking the number of border security personnel trained, the amount of equipment distributed, and the number of border forts constructed does little, if anything, to represent the effectiveness of a border security system. These metrics are considered performance measures and they focus primarily on the process of securing the border. Effects oriented measures focus on results.<sup>47</sup>

Examples of effects oriented metrics would be couched in terms of the ability to detect the rate of change of insurgence in an area. At any given time, the rate of change of insurgents in an area is equal to the rate of border infiltration plus the rate of insurgent recruitment minus the rate of attrition in the area. An analytical model of border patrol that used these quantitative metrics was built by RAND in December 1970. The model relates both functionally and quantitatively the principle problem of insurgent border crossings that occur along stretches of national borders or other lines of defense and permit analysis of candidate border security systems by providing measurable effects.<sup>48</sup> This type of analytical model is what's required in Iraq today to properly measure the effects of any border security strategy or system. The current process of measuring performance by counting troops trained, equipment issued, and border forts built needs to be revised.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper purposely avoided suggesting additional US troops and assets being deployed to solve the Iraq border security problem. This was done in an effort to emphasize the importance of interagency operability and cooperation when dealing with a nation building operation like the one faced by Coalition forces in Iraq today. The US military with all its technological advances still has limitations on how much it can accomplish based on limited funds and assets. Therefore, as operations continue it is important to look at solutions to problems that can eventually be handled by the Iraqi citizens themselves. Being aware of the differences in culture, economy, and capability and understanding a simple solution are the keys to this process.

An unnamed source relayed a story of a US Army General working with Coalition forces in the effort to rebuild Iraq. His troops discovered that a large number of steel containers needed to be thoroughly cleaned and refinished. After looking into the possibility of having the work done by a contractor using a high tech cleaning machine the General suggested finding out how many individuals and how long it would take if Iraqi citizens used tools to clean the barrels by hand. It was determined that the barrels could be cleaned in the same amount of time by the Iraqi individuals as could be done by the contractor with the machine. The General's idea and choice to use Iraqi citizens showed the wisdom that is required in Iraq today. In order for there to be a "better state of peace" the Iraqi people need to be engaged in the process of rebuilding their country at every stage of the effort. Even the simplest task goes along way to establish self worth and feeling of contributions.

History has shown that declaring the end of combat operations and war termination is relatively easy. The real work begins in the aftermath of a war with peace keeping and stability operations. This paper argued that the Iraqi border is a key component of the insurgency's COG. It showed the importance of border security operations and how a simple, well organized, comprehensive plan can lead to a more stable Iraq. It did this by critically analyzing the current border security operations and through careful analysis it was determined that if a border security strategy exists, it lacks the interagency coordination needed to be effective. It suggested that the first step for meaningful interagency coordination was to establish an interagency working group to develop and implement a well organized comprehensive border security strategy. Finally it argued that part of this strategy should include putting the border security air component directly under the control of the Iraq DBE as well as including a valid means of measuring its

effectiveness. It is only through the combined and focused effort on each of the numerous Iraqi reconstruction projects that true long lasting peace and conflict resolution can be obtained.



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